

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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SCS-03 SCA-01 MCT-01 AID-05 PC-01 OC-06 CCO-00

BIB-01 /099 W

-----291416Z 025046 /43

O 291300Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2631

INFO SECDEF WASH DC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER/ECJ4/7//IMMEDIATE

DIA WASH DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 2848

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PINS, AEMR, CG, AO

SUBJ: SHABA ATTACK: ZAIRIAN CHANGE OF COMMAND

1. GENERAL BABIA HAS INFORMED BELGIAN MILREPS AND CZAMISH THAT FRENCH COL RENAULT AND COL GRAS HAD RECENTLY RETURNED FROM KOLWEZI & HAD GIVEN HIM A GLOOMY ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION. THEY HIGHLIGHTED THREE ESSENTIAL POINTS:

A. ELUKI'S STAFF IS INEFFECTIVE IN THAT THEY HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ACTUAL TROOP DISPOSITIONS NOR DO THEY ANTICIPATE NEEDS OF THE TROOPS.

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B. THE TROOPS ARE EQUIPPED ADEQUATELY. WHAT IS REQUIRED, HOWEVER, IS PLANNED AND EFFECTIVE LOGISTICS SUPPORT.

C. WHILE TROOP MORALE IS LOW, WITH EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP THEY WILL STAND AND FIGHT.

2. BABIA MENTIONED THAT HE WAS CLOSETED PRIVATELY WITH MOBUTU FOR TWO

HOURS YESTERDAY AGAIN STRESSING THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION AND THE NEED FOR DRAMATIC CHANGES IN THE OVERALL COMMAND STRUCTURE. HE VOLUNTEERED TO ASSUME THE KOLWEZI COMMAND.

COMMENT: IT APPEARS TO US, BELGIAN, AND FRENCH MILITARY OBSERVERS THAT BABIA HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO MOVE MOBUTU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION MILITARILY BY HIS HARD HITTING AND FORTHRIGHT REPORTS TO THE PRESIDENT. END COMMENT.

3. AS A RESULT OF BABIA'S DISCUSSIONS MOBUTU MADE THE FOLLOWING DECISIONS EFFECTIVE 29 MAR 77.

A. GEN. SINGHA, CHIEF OF STAFF GENDARMERIE AND HIS HANDPICKED GENDARMERIE STAFF WILL ASSUME COMMAND OF AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEFENSE OF KOLWEZI. COMMAND PARTY SCHEDULED TO LEAVE FOR KOLWEZI 0400Z 29 MAR.

B. ELUKI AND HIS STAFF WILL HAVE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF TACTICAL UNITS WEST OF KOLWEZI. HE IS TO BE ORDERED BY SINGHA TO MOVE HIS COMMAND POST OUT OF KOLWEZI TO A FORWARD LOCATION TO THE WEST.

COMMENT:

1. BABIA EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS A PRACTICAL SOLUTION SINCE SINGHA IS AN EXPERIENCED OFFICER; HE IS ALSO A POLITICAL COMMISSAIRE WHO CAN ACCORDINGLY ISSUE ORDERS TO CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES.

2. BELGIANS HAVE HIGH REGARD FOR SINGHA AND FEEL WHILE MOBUTU SHOULD  
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HAVE RELIEVED ELUKI, AT LEAST HIS AUTHORITY IS SOMEWHAT LESSENED. THE NEXT STEP WILL PROBABLY BE ELUKI'S RELIEF. END COMMENT.

C. BABIA IS TO BE ACTING REPEAT ACTING CAPTAIN-GENERAL IN KINSHASA, ACTING CHIEF OF STAFF GROUND FORCES (MENTIONED THAT COL MAMPA IS CONFINED TO QUARTERS) ACTING CHIEF OF STAFF GENDARMERIE, PLUS DIRECTOR GENERAL DDN.

COMMENT:

1. BABIA HAS ALREADY DIRECTED THAT A REMOTE CONTROL UNIT (VOICE) BE PLACED IN THE OPERATIONS ROOM HE HAS ESTABLISHED NEXT TO HIS OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS WITH KOLWEZI.

2. HE HAS CHOSEN A STAFF FOR HIS CAPTAIN GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

3. MENTIONED HE WILL VISIT THE LOGISTICS BASE (KINSHASA) TOMORROW AND STIR THINGS UP. IN THIS REGARD WE HAVE ALL BEEN ASKING HIM FOR A DETAILED INVENTORY OF CURRENT STOCK LEVELS IN ORDER TO ASSESS

RATIONALITY OF GOZ REQUESTS. LTHOUGH HE HAS ASKED FOR SUCH AN INVENTORY, IT HAS NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING SINCE LOGISTICS IS ONE OF CAPTAIN GENERAL'S (BUMBA) RESPONSIBILITIES. HE SAID TO US QUOTE THEY WILL TART WORKING ON IT TOMORROW END QUOTE END COMMENT.

D. CAPTAIN GENERAL BUMBA HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO PROCEED TO KAMINA BASE OSTENSIBLY TO DIRECT OPERATIONS BUT REAL PURPOSE IS TO EASE HIM OUT OF THE PICTURE. BABIA REMARKED THAT WHEN MOBUTU WAS DECIDING ON CHANGES HE INTERJECTED TO THE PRESIDENT THAT IT WILL BE TO NO AVAIL IF BUMBA IS IN KOLWEZI WITH AUTHORITY TO COUNTERMAND ORDERS.

4. AT CONCLUSION OF MEETING COL RENAULT AND COL GRAS ARRIVED. RENAULT WAS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE FOR PARIS EVENING 28 MAR BY SWISS AIR. THEY STATED THEY HAD SEEN THE PRESIDENT AND CONFIRMED THAT BABIA HAD GIVEN MOBUTU AN ACCURATE AND HONEST RENDITION OF THEIR FINDINGS.

5. AS A PARTING REMARK BABIA STATED THAT SINGHA WAS UNDER ORDERS TO CONFIDENTIAL

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MOVE THE NGOY BN TO THE WEST IN ORDER TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY.

6. IN A LATER PRIVATE CONVERSATION CZAMISH QUERIED FRENCH ON CONCLUSION REGARDING MORALE OF THE TROOPS. COL GRAS CONFIRMED THAT IT WAS HIS OPINION THAT THE TROOPS WOULD STAND AND FIGHT UNDER EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP. HE MENTIONED THAT HE RECOMMENDED THAT MOBUTU PERSONALLY TAKE COMMAND. BABIA REJECTED THIS STATING MOBUTU WAS NEEDED IN KINSHASA TO CONDUCT THE AFFAIRS OF STATE. BABIA RECOMMENDED TO MOBUTU THAT HE NOT VISIT KOLWEZI UNTIL LATER IN WEEK AFTER SINGHA HAS BEEN ON THE GROUND A FEW DAYS.

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009